

**Remarks/Arguments:**

Claims 1-56 are pending. Claims 1-56 stand rejected.

**Drawing Objections**

Figure 1-3 and 5A are objected to for lacking the designation "prior art." Applicants have corrected this oversight and respectfully request therefore that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

**Objections to the Specification**

The disclosure was objected to for containing an informality. Specifically, the Examiner indicated that Fig. 6D was not described in the "brief description of the drawing." Applicants have provided the description of Figure 6D herein and therefore respectfully request that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

**Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112**

Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants have corrected the informality by substituting "cylindrical body" for the objected term "tubular structure." Applicants respectfully request therefore that the rejection of claim 25 be withdrawn.

**Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102**

The Office Action sets forth at page 3, paragraph 6, "claims 1-2, 6-8 11-12, 17-22, 28-31, 45-49 and 53-56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (e) as being anticipated by Looock et al (US 2003/0007715 A1)." Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons set forth below.

The filing date of Looock is May 29, 2002 which is after applicants' filing date. Presumably the Office Action is relying upon the priority claimed by Looock of two earlier provisional applications. Although the Office Action relies upon the Looock publication as disclosing certain features attributed to applicants' claimed invention, there is no showing that the provisional applications relied upon for an earlier filing date disclose applicants' claimed invention. Therefore applicants respectfully request that such a showing be made or that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn.

Alternatively, applicants submit Declarations of the Inventors (Exhibit A) and an employee of the assignee (Exhibit B) that show that applicants' invention predates the effective filing date of Looock. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Looock is improper and should be withdrawn.

**Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103**

The Office Action set forth at page 5, paragraph 8 "claims 3-5, 9-10, 13-16, 39-44, 50-52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Looock et al. in view of Lehmann (5,528,040)." Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons set forth below.

As noted above, the primary reference Looock cannot stand. Furthermore, there has been no contention or showing in the Office Action that Lehmann disclosed the features of applicants' independent claims 1 and 48 from which claims 3-5, 9-10, 13-16, 39-44 and 50-52 depend. Therefore, as the primary reference Looock has been overcome and the Lehmann reference lacks the features of the primary reference, applicants respectfully request that the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. 103 (e) as being unpatentable over Looock in view of Lehmann be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

**Double Patenting Rejection**

The Office Action at page 7, paragraph 10 sets forth, "claims 1-56 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-6, 11-61 of copending Application No. 10/157,400." As noted in the Office Action, this rejection is provisional because the claims of application 10/157,400 have not yet been patented. Accordingly, applicants respectfully decline to address the propriety of the double patenting rejection until such time as the claims in Application No. 10/157,400 are patented. At such time, applicants may consider filing a terminal disclaimer if the cited claims of Application No. 10/157,400 are patented as originally filed.

Appln. No.: 10/017,367  
December 11, 2003  
Reply to Office Action of September 11, 2003

PRU-101US

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth above, applicants respectfully submit that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Attachments: Figures 1-3 and 5A (4 sheets)  
Affidavits (Exhibits A & B)

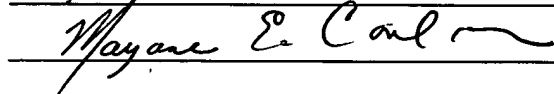
Dated: December 11, 2003

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The Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge payment to Deposit Account No. **18-0350** of any fees associated with this communication.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on: December 11, 2003

Maryanne E. Coulson

  
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